



## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

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### **DDA warns sellers and consumers about uninspected meat and poultry**

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) Food Products Inspection Section is reminding store owners that it is against Delaware law to sell uninspected meat and poultry. Consumers are also cautioned to be sure that they are purchasing only inspected products. DDA's concern is consumer safety. Uninspected meats have the potential of carrying foodborne pathogens that could result in serious illness.

By law (<http://www.delcode.state.de.us/title3/c087/>), all meat and poultry products that are sold, or offered for sale, for human consumption must be inspected and bear the mark of inspection from the facility that processes the product. This inspection is necessary to assure that domestic meat and poultry products distributed to consumers are safe, wholesome, and unadulterated. In Delaware, the only two sources approved for inspecting meat for sale for public consumption are the United States Department of Agriculture or the DDA Food Products Inspection Section.

Uninspected meat is only for the consumption of persons who form part of the animal owner's household. Un-inspected meat cannot be sold or given away to others.

Violations do occur in Delaware and other states. In October 2006, the Delaware Department of Agriculture worked with the Delaware Department of Justice to convict a Newark retail store of violating the Delaware Meat and Poultry Inspection law. The violations were for non-inspected meat and poultry products. In Superior Court, the owners were sentenced to one-year probation and fined \$500. Further violation of the law may result in incarceration and more severe fines. All product was confiscated and destroyed. A recent case in Georgia resulted in the arrest of five people on multiple felony counts. Their case is pending; and they are in custody.

To report the possible sale of uninspected meat and poultry products, please contact the DDA Food Products Inspection Section:

Phone: (800) 282-8685 (DE only)  
          (302) 698-4500  
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